

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (currently amended) A pneumatic tire in which a tread surface thereof is divided into a central land portion between inner longitudinal grooves, intermediate land portions between the inner and outer longitudinal grooves, and shoulder land portions axially outside the outer longitudinal grooves, by being provided with the inner longitudinal grooves extending on both sides of a tire equator in a circumferential direction of the tire and the outer longitudinal grooves extending on both sides thereof in the circumferential direction of the tire, a width  $W_i$  of the inner longitudinal grooves being 1.1 to 1.5 times a width  $W_o$  of the outer longitudinal grooves, wherein

the central land portion and the intermediate land portions are formed into circumferential ribs which continuously extend in the circumferential direction of the tire, and on each of the shoulder land portions, blocks divided by lug grooves are arranged as a block row in the circumferential direction of the tire,

each intermediate land portion includes inclined grooves extending outward in the axial direction of the tire from an inner end away from the inner longitudinal groove by a small distance  $L_a$  to an outer end which intersects with the outer longitudinal grooves while increasing an angle  $\theta$  with respect to the circumferential direction of the tire, the angle  $\theta$  in the inner end is 0 to 25° and the angle  $\theta$  in the outer end is 60 to 80°,

a pitch  $P_1$  between the inclined grooves in the circumferential direction of the tire is greater than a pitch  $P_2$  between the lug grooves in the circumferential direction of the tire,

the lug grooves each being provided with a groove volume reducing portion in the vicinity of an intersecting portion between the lug grooves and the outer longitudinal grooves, each groove volume reducing portion reducing a groove volume of each lug groove, each groove

volume reducing portion being a tie-rod which protrudes from a groove bottom of each lug groove.

2. (original) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein the outer end of the inclined grooves includes a chamfered portion from which a corner portion where an axially outer groove wall of the inclined grooves and an axially inner groove wall of the outer longitudinal grooves intersect with each other is removed.

3. (previously amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein an axially inner groove wall of each outer longitudinal groove is inclined at an angle  $\alpha$  relative to a circumferential direction of the tire.

4. (previously amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 3, wherein an axially outer groove wall of each outer longitudinal groove is inclined at an angle  $\beta$  relative to a circumferential direction of the tire.

5. (canceled)

6. (previously amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein a width of the lug grooves is reduced outward in the axial direction of the tire.

7. (canceled)

8. (currently amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein a width  $W_y$  of the inclined grooves is smaller than the a width  $W_o$  of the outer longitudinal grooves.

9. (original) The pneumatic tire according to claim 8, wherein the width  $W_y$  of the inclined grooves is 40 to 60% of the width  $W_o$  of the outer longitudinal grooves.

10. (previously amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein the small distance  $L_a$  is 3 to 10 mm.

11. (previously amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein a width  $K_i$  of the central land portion is 5 to 20% of a tread-ground contact width TW.

12. (previously amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein a width  $K_m$  of the intermediate land portion is 10 to 20% of a tread-ground contact width TW and is greater than the width  $K_i$  of the central land portion.

13. (previously amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein a width  $K_o$  of the shoulder land portion is 10 to 30% of a tread-ground contact width TW and is greater than the width  $K_m$  of the intermediate land portion.

14. (previously amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 4, wherein the angles  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  are 1 to 6°.

15. (original) The pneumatic tire according to claim 14, wherein the angle  $\alpha$  and the angle  $\beta$  are equal to each other.

16. (previously amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein a straight distance L1 between the inner end and the outer end of the inclined grooves is 20 to 40% of a tread-ground contact width TW.

17. (canceled)

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.